Trend Study 13A-4-99

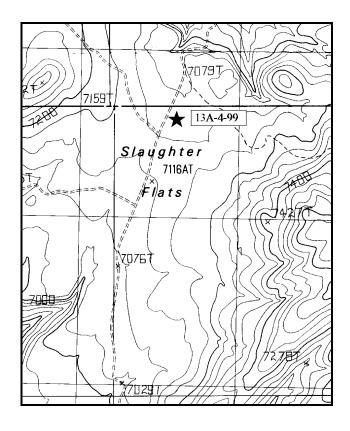
Study site name: Slaughter Flat . Range type: Chained, Seeded P-J .

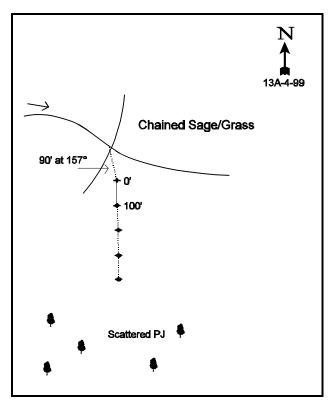
Compass bearing: frequency baseline 165°M.

Footmark (first frame placement) 5 feet, footmarks (frequency belts) line 1 (11 & 95ft), line 2 (34ft), line 3 (59ft), line 4 (71ft).

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Turn east on the Black Ridge Road 0.15 miles south of mile marker 113 on SR 191 south of Moab. Proceed up canyon 3.65 miles to a fork by a stock pond. Bear right up the dugway for 1.15 miles to a fork. Stay left (road #116), go 1 mile to another fork. Stay left, proceed 0.6 miles to a fork. Stay right, proceed 0.35 miles to the powerlines. Pass under the powerlines and across a road. Continue 0.7 miles to a fence (Forest Service boundary). Proceed through the gate, go 1.7 miles to a crossroads in a large chained flat. The transect is located in the SE quarter, marked by short fence posts. The 0-foot baseline stake is tagged #7125.





Map Name: Mount Tukuhnikivatz

Township 28S, Range 23E, Section 1

Diagrammatic Sketch

UTM 4251046.374 N, 644362.910 E

DISCUSSION

Trend Study No. 13A-4 (33-4)

The Slaughter Flat Study area has long been recognized as important big game winter range. In 1999, pellet group transects indicated use at 25 deer days use/acre (62 ddu/ha), 53 elk days use/acre (131 edu/ha), and 22 cow days use/acre (53 cdu/ha). In 1974, 940 acres were chained and seeded. It is successionally now a sagebrush-grass community. This Forest Service land is grazed using a combination rest/deferred rotation system from mid-June through mid-October.

The transect is located in an open flat valley between pinyon-juniper ridges to the east and west. The chaining extends to the north. Due to the level valley bottom, there is not a distinguishable aspect for the site and slope is negligible. The site elevation is approximately 7,100 feet, which drains to the east.

The orange, sandy clay loam soil is moderately deep (effective rooting depth of almost 14 inches), with a loose structure on the surface. The soil has a neutral pH (7.2) and an above normal organic matter content in the soil surface. There is soil loss from the bare interspaces and evidence of sheet and rill erosion, but no gullies are on the site. There is some pedestaling of the bunch grasses.

Wyoming big sagebrush is the key browse species on the site. Identification of the Artemisia subspecies was difficult because of hybridization with other sagebrush subspecies and different varieties which may have been seeded onto the site after the chaining treatment. The most frequently found sagebrush subspecies on this site would be Wyoming big sagebrush. The sagebrush made up 60% of the browse cover in 1994, and 56% in 1999. There has been steady, but slight decrease in the sagebrush population since 1987. The population has gone from 3,298 plants/acre (1987), to 2,940 plants/acre (1994), to it's current level at 2,560 plants/acre (1999). The population has shown through the years, varying amounts of use, but not use that should cause this kind of loss. Thus, sagebrush loss has most likely been caused by years of extended drought and associated winter injury. The proportion of the population that shows heavy use has never exceeded 22%. Percent decadency has increased from 10% to 20%. Twenty-six percent of the population was classified as young in 1987, now this is only 16%. Biotic potential has varied greatly through the years, 0% in 1987, 12% in 1994, and only 2% in 1999. The larger, more vigorous plants (which display characteristics of Basin big sagebrush) appear to produce the most seed and show only light to moderate hedging, as opposed to the appearance of moderate to heavy hedging on the relatively smaller, mature individuals that resemble more that of Wyoming big sagebrush. Low rabbitbrush is prominent because of its relatively high density. It has increased from providing 27% to 30% of the browse cover. Other more palatable browse species are uncommon, comprising only a minor percentage of the browse population. The serviceberry, white-stemmed rubber rabbitbrush, and slenderbush eriogonum display good vigor, but sustain moderately heavy use. Overall density of other desirable browse is quite low.

In 1987, it was noted that grasses were an important vegetative component on this site as western wheatgrass was fairly thick in places; but the most abundant perennial species were needle-and-thread, muttongrass, crested wheatgrass, and Indian ricegrass. Total grass cover in 1994 was 15%, which was 43% of the total vegetative cover at that time. Cheatgrass was fairly common throughout and dense in localized areas, yet it only made up 2% of the grass cover. Twenty species of forbs were encountered on the site, but together they contributed to a little more than 3% cover.

In 1999, there were only 7 forb species which contributed to less than 1% of the cover. Of the eight perennial grass species, only crested wheatgrass and western wheatgrass showed significant increases (sum of nested frequency and cover). There were significant losses to needle and thread grass which used to be the most abundant species. There were also significant losses to bottle brush squirreltail, Indian rice grass, Sandberg bluegrass, and mutton bluegrass. Long-term drought has had a detrimental effect on most of the native grasses and forbs. Cheatgrass has greatly increased its deleterious influence on the successional development

of this community. It has increased in cover by over 23 times since 1994.

1994 TREND ASSESSMENT

The trend for the soil is somewhat mixed, but the percentage of bare soil has not shown a significant change and the slight decrease in litter cover is to be expected with the extended drought. Trend for now is considered stable. The trend for the key browse is slightly down. Especially with a ratio of one in eight plants being dead. With the high biotic potential and establishment of the seedlings, this should turn around. The trend for the perennial species in the herbaceous understory is stable.

TREND ASSESSMENT

soil - stable browse - slightly down herbaceous understory - stable

1999 TREND ASSESSMENT

The trend for the soil is still somewhat mixed, with the percent bare soil increasing and photo evidence of more pedestaling of herbaceous species. There were also increases in cheatgrass and prickly pear cactus. Trend for soil is slightly down. The trend for the key browse is again slightly down. This is because the ratio of dead to live plants has increased from 1:8 (11%) to 1:5 (17%). Percent decadence has also increased from 10% to 20%. The percentage of decadent plants that are classified as dying has also increased from 33% to 36%. There has also been a significant increase in the low rabbitbrush population. The trend for the perennial species in the herbaceous understory would be down overall, even with the significant increases for crested wheatgrass and western wheatgrass. These increases have not made up for the decreases for the other five native perennial species. Cheatgrass is increasing to where it elevates the hazard of fire which would cause the loss of the sagebrush component and the communities use as a big game winter range.

TREND ASSESSMENT

soil - slightly down browse - slightly down

herbaceous understory - slightly down

HERBACEOUS TRENDS --Herd unit 13A, Study no: 4

T y	Species	Nested	Freque	ncy	Quadra	t Freque	ency	Ave:	_
p e		'87	'94	'99	'87	'94	'99	1 94	(99
G	Agropyron cristatum	_a 57	_a 79	_b 211	23	30	74	2.23	8.42
G	Agropyron smithii	_a 8	_b 42	_c 64	3	17	25	.31	.49
G	Bromus inermis	-	1	1	-	1	1	.00	.00
G	Bromus tectorum (a)	-	83	237	-	33	73	.32	7.39
G	Oryzopsis hymenoides	_a 24	_b 66	_a 25	12	27	13	1.71	.83
G	Poa fendleriana	_c 232	_b 146	_a 97	78	56	36	3.84	2.91
G	Poa secunda	_a 20	_b 47	_a 14	9	23	5	.53	.07
G	Sitanion hystrix	_b 24	_b 18	_a 1	12	11	1	.13	.03
G	Stipa comata	_e 221	_b 168	_a 26	79	64	10	6.00	.63
G	Vulpia octoflora (a)	-	1	1	-	1	1	.00	.00
To	otal for Annual Grasses	0	84	238	0	34	74	0.32	7.39
To	otal for Perennial Grasses	586	567	439	216	229	165	14.77	13.41
Т	otal for Grasses	586	651	677	216	263	239	15.10	20.81

Т	Species	Nested	Freque	ncy	Quadra	t Freque	ency	Ave	
y p		'87	'94	'99	'87	'94	'99	Cove 194	er % (99
e									
F	Antennaria spp.	-	3	=.	-	1	-	.00	-
F	Arabis spp.	a ⁻	ь17	a ⁻	-	8	-	.04	-
F	Astragalus convallarius	_a 11	_b 35	_a 3	5	15	1	1.37	.00
F	Castilleja chromosa	_a 6	_b 4	a ⁻	3	3	-	.04	-
F	Cirsium spp.	-	3	-	-	1	-	.00	-
F	Cordylanthus wrightii (a)	_b 16	ь17	_a 2	8	8	1	.04	.03
F	Crepis acuminata	_b 9	_b 5	a ⁻	7	3	-	.01	-
F	Cryptantha spp.	_b 12	_b 8	a ⁻	7	5	-	.02	-
F	Draba reptans (a)	-	_b 39	_a 4	-	18	1	.09	.00
F	Erigeron pumilus	8	3	1	5	1	1	.00	.00
F	Gayophytum ramosissimum (a)	-	ь13	a ⁻	-	5	-	.02	-
F	Lappula occidentalis (a)	-	_b 5	a ⁻	-	3	-	.01	-
F	Microsteris gracilis (a)	-	_b 73	_a 15	-	28	6	.38	.03
F	Petradoria pumila	-	3	-	-	1	-	.03	-
F	Phlox longifolia	a ⁻	_b 98	a a	-	44	-	.27	-
F	Polygonum douglasii (a)	-	_b 49	a ⁻	-	21	-	.10	-
F	Ranunculus testiculatus (a)	-	_b 12	a ⁻	-	4	-	.02	-
F	Sphaeralcea coccinea	_a 17	_b 78	_b 64	9	34	29	.57	.71
F	Taraxacum officinale	_a 1	_b 12	a ⁻	1	7	-	.04	-
F	Tragopogon dubius	1	-	ı	1	-	-	-	-
F	Trifolium gymnocarpon	_b 118	_b 102	_a 3	56	49	1	.32	.00
F	Unknown forb-perennial	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
F	Zigadenus paniculatus	ь15	a ⁻	a ⁻	6	=	-	-	-
Т	otal for Annual Forbs	16	208	21	8	87	8	0.68	0.06
Т	otal for Perennial Forbs	201	371	71	102	172	32	2.74	0.72
Т	otal for Forbs	217	579	92	110	259	40	3.43	0.79

Values with different subscript letters are significantly different at % = 0.10

BROWSE TRENDS --

Herd unit 13A, Study no: 4

T y	Species	Str	rip iency	Ave Cov	-
p e		1 1640	'99	1 94	'99
В	Amelanchier utahensis	0	0	-	-
В	Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis	68	69	10.17	10.57
В	Chrysothamnus nauseosus albicaulis	1	1	-	1
В	Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus	83	86	4.55	5.58
В	Coryphantha vivipara arizonica	0	2	-	.00
В	Eriogonum microthecum	0	1	-	-
В	Gutierrezia sarothrae	6	2	.02	.15
В	Juniperus osteosperma	0	1	.15	.38
В	Opuntia polyacantha	42	44	.89	1.16
В	Pediocactus simpsonii	0	1	-	-
В	Pinus edulis	0	1	1.16	.93
To	otal for Browse	200	208	16.95	18.79

BASIC COVER --

Herd unit 13A, Study no: 4

Cover Type	Nes Frequ		Ave	rage Cove	er %
	116 4	'99	'87	'94	'99
Vegetation	349	358	12.75	35.90	38.68
Rock	61	15	0	.27	.06
Pavement	118	103	0	.24	.52
Litter	398	370	53.25	39.65	41.77
Cryptogams	24	50	.75	.36	.52
Bare Ground	340	314	33.25	35.01	37.35

SOIL ANALYSIS DATA --

Herd Unit 13A, Study # 04, Study Name: Slaughter Flat

Effective rooting depth (cm)	Temp °F (depth)	рН	%sand	%silt	%clay	%0M	PPM P	РРМ К	dS/m
130.4	64.8 (14.3)	7.2	52.9	19.8	27.3	1.9	50.4	89.6	0.4

PELLET GROUP DATA --

Herd unit 13A, Study no: 4

Туре	Qua Frequ 194	
Rabbit	11	19
Elk	41	34
Deer	14	36
Cattle	1	1

Pellet Transect Days Use/Acre (ha)
N/A
53 (131)
25 (62)
23 (57)

BROWSE CHARACTERISTICS --Herd unit 13A, Study no: 4

		nit 13A,								-					T			
A G	Y R	Form C	lass (N	Vo. of P	lants)						Vigor Cla	ass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)		Total
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Aı	nela	nchier ut	tahens	is														
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	94	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0			0
	99	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0			0
M		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		-	0
	94 99	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		54	0
		-		-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	_	0	37	51	0
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	99	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-		0
D	87	_	_	_	_	_	_	_		_	_	_	_	_	0			0
ľ	94	1	_	_	_	_	-	_	-	-	1	_	_	_	20			1
	99	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	20			1
%	Plar	nts Showi	ng	Mo	derate	Use	Hea	vy Us	e	Po	oor Vigor				(%Change		
		'87	C	00%	6	,	100	%		00)%				-	-39%		
		'94		00%			00%)%				-	+ 0%		
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Y		36	1							_	37	_	_	_	1233			37
1	94	29	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	29	_	_	_	780			29
	99	54	2	_	-	-	_	_	_	_	56	_	-	-	1120			56
N	87	69	3	_	_			_		_	72	_	_	_	2400	5	10	72
10.	94	312	1	_	2	_	_	_	_	_	315	_	_	_	6300	5	12	315
	99	270	36	_	-	_	-	_	-	-	306	_	_	_	6120	5	12	306
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A Y Form Class (No. of Plants) G R E 1 2 3 4 5 6 7										V	igor Cl	ass			Plants Per Acre	Average (inches)	Total	
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1 ~	Y	Form Cla	ass (N	o. of P	lants)						Vigor Cl	ass			Plants	Average	Total
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